

Calendar No. 118

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 843

[Report No. 119–41]

To require the Secretary of Commerce to establish the Sea Turtle Rescue Assistance Grant Program.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 4, 2025

Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. BOOKER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

JULY 16, 2025

Reported by Mr. CRUZ, with an amendment

[Insert the part printed in italic]

A BILL

To require the Secretary of Commerce to establish the Sea Turtle Rescue Assistance Grant Program.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Sea Turtle Rescue As-
5 sistance and Rehabilitation Act of 2025”.

1 **SEC. 2. SEA TURTLE RESCUE, REHABILITATION, AND RE-**
 2 **SPONSE.**

3 Section 408 of the Marine Mammal Protection Act
 4 of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1421f–1) is amended—

5 (1) in subsection (b), by adding at the end the
 6 following:

7 “(10) SEA TURTLE RESCUE, REHABILITATION,
 8 AND RESPONSE.—

9 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the avail-
 10 ability of appropriations specific to address sea
 11 turtle rescue, rehabilitation, and response, the
 12 Secretary of Commerce and the Director of the
 13 United States Fish and Wildlife Service shall
 14 include separate eligibility for grants under this
 15 subsection to address the purposes described in
 16 paragraph (2) with respect to sea turtles.

17 “(B) CONDITIONS OF GRANT.—A grant
 18 awarded under this subsection to address sea
 19 turtle rescue, rehabilitation, and response
 20 shall—

21 “(i) include the equivalent grant cri-
 22 teria and administration authorities and
 23 requirements described under paragraph
 24 (3), subparagraphs (A) and (B) of para-
 25 graph (4), and paragraphs (5) through (9),
 26 developed, as appropriate, and awarded

1 separately for sea turtles and in consulta-
2 tion with the United States Fish and Wild-
3 life Service in lieu of the Marine Mammal
4 Commission; and

5 “(ii) in addition to the considerations
6 under paragraph (4)(B), also consider re-
7 habilitation of stranded sea turtles.

8 “(C) ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA.—In order to
9 apply for a grant awarded under this subsection
10 to address sea turtle rescue, rehabilitation, and
11 response, an entity shall—

12 “(i) submit an application described
13 in paragraph (5) to the Secretary of Com-
14 merce with respect to sea turtles;

15 “(ii) be authorized by and in compli-
16 ance with—

17 “(I) an authorization issued
18 under section 10(a)(1)(A) of the En-
19 dangered Species Act of 1973 (16
20 U.S.C. 1539(a)(1)(A)) with respect to
21 sea turtles; or

22 “(II) a cooperative agreement en-
23 tered into under section 6 of the En-
24 dangered Species Act of 1973 (16

1 U.S.C. 1535) with respect to sea tur-
 2 tles;

3 “(iii) comply with the standard condi-
 4 tions for care and maintenance of captive
 5 sea turtles prescribed by the Secretary of
 6 the Interior when relevant facilities will be
 7 utilized for such purposes; and

8 “(iv) comply with all relevant data re-
 9 porting, requirements, such as the Sea
 10 Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network
 11 data collection requirements.”;

12 (2) by striking subsection (c) and inserting the
 13 following:

14 “(c) RESCUE AND RAPID RESPONSE FUNDS.—

15 “(1) IN GENERAL.—There is established in the
 16 Treasury of the United States—

17 “(A) an interest-bearing fund to *be* known
 18 as the ‘Joseph R. Geraci Marine Mammal Res-
 19 cue and Rapid Response Fund’; and

20 “(B) an interest-bearing fund to be known
 21 as the ‘Sea Turtle Rescue, Rehabilitation, and
 22 Rapid Response Fund’.

23 “(2) USE OF FUNDS.—Amounts in the funds
 24 established under paragraph (1) shall be available

only for use by the Secretary to provide emergency assistance.”; and

(3) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “marine mammal rescue and response” after “to carry out the”;

(ii) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as subparagraph (C);

(iii) by inserting after clause (ii) of subparagraph (A) the following:

“(B) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS WITH RESPECT TO SEA TURTLE RESCUE, REHABILITATION, AND RESPONSE.—There is authorized to be appropriated for the Secretary of Commerce to carry out the sea turtle rescue, rehabilitation, and response grant program under subsection (b)(10), \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2030, to remain available until expended.”; and

(iv) in subparagraph (C), as redesignated by clause (ii), by inserting “or (B)” after “subparagraph (A)”;

(B) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

1 “(2) RESCUE AND RAPID RESPONSE FUNDS.—

2 There is authorized to be appropriated—

3 “(A) to the Joseph R. Geraci Marine
4 Mammal Rescue and Rapid Response Fund
5 \$500,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through
6 2030; and

7 “(B) to the Sea Turtle Rescue, Rehabilita-
8 tion, and Rapid Response Fund \$500,000 for
9 each of fiscal years 2025 through 2030.”.

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